



Landmarks

Newsletter of the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy

Spring 2010

SMLC Protects 26 acres in Wayne County

By Jack R. Smiley, Director of Land Protection

In December 2009, the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy added to its growing list of protected nature preserves by accepting title to a 26-acre property in Van Buren Township, near the intersection of Belleville Road and I-94 in western Wayne County. This was SMLC's fifth land protection project in Wayne County. The land was donated by Ralph Krochmal and his partners in K.R.G. Investments who had owned the property for the past 20 years. They had purchased the property as an investment, but wetlands and the recent economic downturn hindered their efforts to sell or develop the property.

The Detroit Audubon Society partnered in the project by accepting a conservation easement on the property prior to SMLC receiving title. This gave the property an extra layer of protection and it also enabled the donors to take advantage of extra income tax deductions which are unique to conservation easements.

The property was important to protect since it is largely forested wetlands and provides a needed stopover site for the many songbirds that migrate through the area (see article on page 8). The good quality native forest consists of a variety of trees including Silver Maple, Swamp White Oak, Northern Red Oak, Sycamore, Basswood and American Elm. These trees support a host of insect species which provide critical "fuel" for many Neotropical migrants such as warblers, tanagers, thrushes, grosbeaks, vireos, cuckoos and orioles. The forest also seems to have good potential

habitat for nesting Eastern Screech Owls, Great-horned Owls, Red-tailed Hawks, and Cooper's Hawks.

A small tributary of the Huron River flows through the site and the Huron River Watershed Council identified the property as a key site to protect through their Bioreserve Project, which identifies and ranks the remaining natural areas within the watershed. Even with all of these



This majestic Swamp White Oak is one of the large mature trees now protected in SMLC's newest nature preserve located in Van Buren Township. It measures over 100 feet tall, and over 6 feet in diameter at its base. Photo by S. Tyrrell

features the SMLC Board was concerned about SMLC's ability to properly care for this new property. A call for pledges was sent out with a fund raising goal of \$5,000. People generously responded by pledging nearly \$9,000 towards stewardship costs. Based upon that support, the project was able to proceed.

The Board and staff of SMLC are pleased that we were able to protect this small but important forest in western Wayne County. We are especially grateful to the land donors and to those who stepped forward to support SMLC's stewardship responsibilities. Please watch for announcements about upcoming stewardship work days and plan to join us when we have a dedication of the property later this year.

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Landmarks

A newsletter published by:

Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy

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Peter Scott, Ann Arbor

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Our Mission

The Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy conserves natural land and open space - including forests, wetlands, meadows, agricultural land, and places of scenic beauty - to provide habitat for wildlife and to enrich the lives of people.



Message from the Executive Director

By Jill A. Lewis, Executive Director

Greetings.

I am enjoying all of the benefits of an early spring and am looking forward to what's in store for SMLC the rest of this year. Besides beauty and growth, spring makes me think of spring cleaning and SMLC is doing our version of nature cleaning. Stewardship workdays have begun and we would love to have you join us in helping keep our preserves and the Conservancy Farm in good shape.

This issue focuses on our newest nature preserve in Van Buren Township, Wayne County. We are pleased we were able to protect this little gem. Several activities are shaping up related to this preserve including getting it ready for our opening to the public.

In addition, this issue also features our 2009 Annual Report. SMLC was able to accomplish a number of significant things this past year including moving ahead on our Accreditation work, restructuring our local divisions, and focusing more attention on our Stewardship program needs.

Although it is early in 2010, SMLC has already been building on our 2009 success. We were recently awarded a \$150,000 challenge grant from The

Carls Foundation. **We need your help** in raising the money that The Carls Foundation will match dollar-for-dollar, \$75,000 by 12-31-10. Please give generously and help support SMLC in this endeavor! Your gifts will count towards SMLC's "**We Care**" Campaign, funding that is building our operational and stewardship capacity.

In addition, we are conducting a board retreat in May that will kick off our first-ever formal strategic planning process. This will also lead in to our conservation planning work later this year. This is exciting for SMLC and for me. These plans will guide the organization in fulfilling our mission and purpose in a more focused manner.

Finally, you should receive your SMLC Spring Appeal Letter in the mail soon. Please let us know if you need additional copies for friends and families. We would love for more people to become involved with SMLC – please check out the calendar of events at www.SMLCland.org for more information.

Thanks for your continued support and interest in Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy. On behalf of all of us, we really appreciate it.

Jill



Photo by Chris Fielding

Leave A Legacy

By Jack R. Smiley, Director of Land Protection

As a member of the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, you are among the 82% of Southeast Michigan residents who annually give to charity. Surprisingly, however, less than 3% of Southeast Michigan residents leave a bequest at death.

To counter that disparity, LEAVE A LEGACY® was established as a community-based effort to encourage people from all walks of life to make gifts from their estates to the nonprofit organizations of their choice. The program encourages prospective donors to work with the charities they already support, or the estate planning professionals with whom they already have a relationship, to establish a charitable bequest or other planned gift.

One of the misconceptions about leaving a legacy is that only the wealthy can do it. The truth however, is that everyone can, no matter what your current income or assets, because planned gifts can be a lot more than money. In fact, some of the most common gifts are stocks, IRAs, cars, real estate and life insurance policies.

Charitable bequests can easily be made through a will (as well as through a trust), so a first step is to prepare a will. Only 50% of those who pass away have one. Without a will, your estate may

be divided contrary to your wishes or, in some cases, it may be greatly diminished by estate taxes.

A bequest may be for a specific amount or for a percentage of the assets in your estate. A specific bequest designates a fixed dollar amount or specific property to a

of designating a portion of your estate is that the bequest automatically adjusts in size as your estate increases or decreases over the years.

You may also designate your bequest for a particular purpose. SMLC's Stewardship Endowment

Fund and the Land Protection Fund are especially suited for bequests. Your contribution will provide benefits year after year, and you will truly be able to "Leave a Legacy". If you choose not to restrict your gift, SMLC will determine the best use for your bequest. For other designations, you should contact the Conservancy to first determine that the intended use is in keeping with the mission and long-term objectives of SMLC.

Regardless of your age or personal finances, it is important to have a will to plan for the ultimate disposition of your assets. Proper planning is essential to provide for your family's

needs and to also provide for charitable works. Remember: You, too, can Leave A Legacy.

HOW YOU CAN LEAVE A LEGACY®

Suggested language for a bequest in a will or trust may be quite simple, such as:

I give to the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, a Michigan nonprofit corporation, the sum of \$ _____
or

I give to the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, a Michigan nonprofit corporation, all of my interest in the following described property:

or
I give to the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, a Michigan nonprofit corporation, _____ percent or all of the residue of my estate to be used as the board of directors of the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy shall determine.

beneficiary. This type of bequest is appropriate when you have an item of value (stocks or bonds, real estate, works of art, etc.) or a definite dollar amount that you wish to leave to a particular charity.

Residual or proportional bequests designate either your entire estate or a percentage of your estate after other specific bequests are distributed. The advantage

Get Email Updates from SMLC

Don't miss out on the latest Conservancy news, events, and announcements. If your address has changed, be sure to let us know that, too. Send an email to Wendy at: wpellerito@SMCLCland.org



Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy 2009 Annual Report



The Year In Review

By James T. Weiner, President

During 2009, the 21st year of the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy (SMLC) and my second year as the President, we have continued our progress toward land conservation and preservation of natural areas in southeast Michigan.

In Superior Township, long time supporters of Superior Land Conservancy (SLC), **Brenda Baker** and **Bill Secrest**, have stepped up to become the co-chairs of our most visible subsidiary, SLC, and they continue its great work in the Township. SLC has continued to expand its outreach and a mailing, initiated by SLC, was sent to every household in Superior Township introducing the Superior Greenway and the more than 1,800 acres of land that have already been protected in partnership with the State, Washtenaw County, Superior Township, and various landowners.

A grant from the **Kodak American Greenways Awards Program** allowed SMLC to identify areas that have good potential for expansion of the Superior Greenway so that it will be a shining example of the efforts of everyone to protect our natural heritage in southeast Michigan. In addition, the Conservancy Farm, part of the Superior Greenway, was, for its first time, operated completely organically on both the ongoing organic garden and the surrounding farm fields.



Photo by Charles Scott

Elsewhere and throughout southeast Michigan, SMLC acquired 26 acres of predominantly wooded wetlands in Van Buren Township, Wayne County. This property is significant because it was identified in the Huron River Watershed Council's Bioreserve

Project as a priority for preservation and has adjacent forested lands that are undeveloped. SMLC also completed a land clearing project in its Chesterfield Nature Preserve (Macomb County) to create an upland meadow. Further, we had a significant step up in our stewardship activities since SMLC experienced a 50% increase in stewardship workdays over 2008.

SMLC's organizational changes are proceeding rapidly. SMLC's efforts to obtain Accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance achieved several milestones, including completing LTA's in-depth organizational "Self-Assessment". Thanks to a grant from the **James A. and Faith Knight Foundation** SMLC also upgraded its office technology with new computers and communication technology.

Finally, I regret to inform you that in 2009 **Pat Robertson** and **Helen Jeter** stepped down from SMLC's board after many long and dedicated years of service to SMLC. We will miss them but both remain committed to SMLC's goals. At the same time, I am pleased to welcome 3 new board directors in 2009: **Maura Jung**, **Jonathan Trevathan**, and **Barry Wauldron**. Maura is an educator and a dedicated environmentalist. Jonathan is an accountant and our new Treasurer (who continues the important efforts of Pat Robertson, Peter Scott and Helen Jeter to name a few of the financial professionals that preceded him), and Barry, a professor at University of Michigan-Dearborn, has many ideas for land protection and agricultural expansion in southeast Michigan.

None of SMLC's achievements could have happened, or will continue, without your support. We appreciate all of you who give of your time and resources to help SMLC and our mission of protecting and preserving natural land and open space in southeast Michigan.

James T. Weiner



Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy 2009 Annual Report

SMLC welcomes new Board Directors in 2009

In March 2009, the SMLC board voted in 1 new director, Jonathan Trevathan, to fill an outgoing director's remaining term and then in November 2009, the SMLC board voted to renew his service and voted in another new director, Jay Schlegel. Both directors started a 3 year term in January 2010. This brings our directors' total to 10.

Jonathan Trevathan is a corporate finance professional with a background in Sarbanes-Oxley and internal audits. He currently works for Sumitomo Bakelite North America as their JSOX Manager. He has received nonprofit board training through a University of Michigan alumni program and received a Bachelor degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Accounting from U of M.

Jay Schlegel is a longtime gardener and committee chair of SMLC's Community Organic Garden program. He is also active with the local Huron Valley Group of the Sierra Club (HVG) and currently serves on the HVG Executive Committee as the fund raising chair. He has worked for the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research for the past 25 years and graduated from U of M with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology.

Jonathan is the SMLC Treasurer serving on both the Executive and Finance Committees while Jay serves as the chair of the Conservancy Farm Committee. Please help us welcome both.

SMLC CREATES 2 NEW RESTRICTED FUNDS

SMLC's board voted to approve two new restricted funds in November 2008 and SMLC rolled those out for donations in 2009. The **Monroe County Fund** and the **Superior Township Fund** were created to allow donors a way to support the work of both SMLC and the local divisions in those geographic areas.

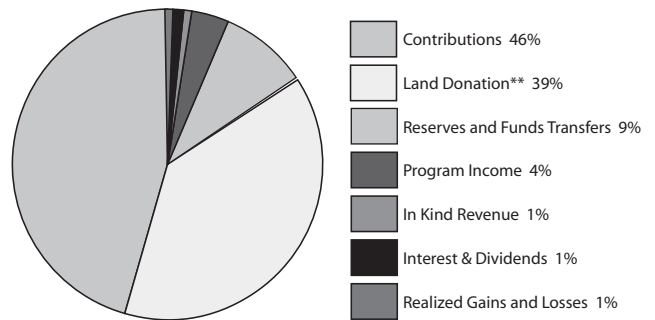
Donors can now restrict gifts to SMLC in the following ways:

- General Fund
- Land Protection Fund (including the Land Acquisition and Stewardship programs and Special Projects as announced)
- Monroe County Fund
- Superior Township Fund
- Stewardship Endowment Fund

For more information about SMLC's local divisions, Monroe County Land Conservancy and Superior Land Conservancy, please see page 10.

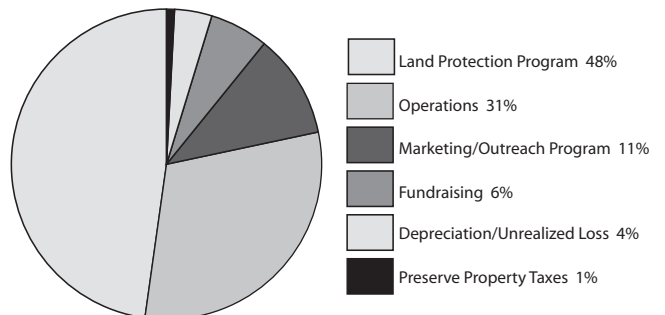
2009 Financial Report

Revenue: \$297,932*



** Van Buren Township nature preserve

Expenses: \$190,958*



* unaudited



Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy 2009 Annual Report

Thank you for supporting land protection in 2009!

The Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy extends appreciation for the gifts from all of our supporters in 2009. Your contributions are what make it possible to continue protecting natural land and open space in southeast Michigan.

Gifts from Foundations & Organizations

\$25,000 and up

Anonymous

\$15,000 - \$24,999

Anonymous

Land Trust Alliance and
Heart of the Lakes Center for
Land Conservation Policy

\$5,000 - \$14,999

Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation
Community Foundation for Southeast
Michigan - Fred G. & Stephanie
Secrest Fund
James A. & Faith Knight Foundation

\$1,000 - \$4,999

DTE Energy Foundation
Raymond C. & Anna T. Johnson
Foundation

Under \$1,000

Bentley Elementary Social Fund
Country Garden Club Northville
P.B.W.O.A. Inc.
Pfizer Foundation Matching Gifts
Program
St. Michael Catholic Community
Yardeners of St. Clair
Ypsilanti Garden Club
Zonta Club of NW Wayne County Area

Gifts from Individuals

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Anonymous (x2)
Patsy Knoop
Andrew King
David & Phyllis Koslow
William L. Secrest & Misty Callies
Andrea & David Serafin
Brad Tomtishen & Lynda Oswald

\$500 - \$999

Anonymous
Brian Carroll
Donna Chrzanowski
Thomas Clough
Jim Edwards
Marilyn & Jeffrey Gilbert
Nur Akcasu & Jeffery Hannah
Jane & Dan Hayes
Helen Jeter
Robert M. Johnson
Maura & Kurt Jung
David & Valerie Malaney
Eric & Monica Malloy
Emily Nietering
Jim & Pat Robertson
Will & Barbara Scott
Michelle Serreyn
Elvera & David Shappirio
Philip & Jeanne Smith
Edward Thoma
Jonathan Trevathan
Alan & Peggy Van Kerckhove
Betty Welsh

\$250 - \$499

Carla K. Bisaro
John & Marcia Covert
Bill Craig
Jennifer Hart
Neil & Mary Hodges
Richard Kent
Marianne Lembfeld
Sally Lunn & Bob Krzewinski
Ed Palermo & Gabrielle Todd
Joanna Pease
Dale Petty & Jeannine Palms
Dan & Rosemary Rieder
Jay Schlegel
Ati & Jennifer Tislerics

\$100 - \$249

Susan Abahazy
Doris Applebaum
Jacob Armstrong
Linda Baes
Jocelyn Baker
Fran & Bill Beckley
Jan & Michael-David Ben Dor

Anita Blasius
Carolyn Buell
Delwyn & Maurice Callies
Don & Carol Carlson
Carolyn & John Carr
Catherine Carroll
Holly Christensen
Archer Christian
John Copley & Jan Berry
Julie A. Craves & Darrin O'Brien
Monte & Kristen Delmonte
Joan Doman
Cynthia Dombrowski
Leona & Robert Duffey
Darry & Tobi Dusbiber
Jennifer Fike & Jon Cioffi
Connie Fitzner
Charlotte & Dr. Orin Gelderloos
Joseph Gembala
Suzanne Goodrich
Carole L. Hann
Lynn & Lois Hansen
Anna Holden
Bonnie & Gary Hollander
Ronald Houtz
Adel Iqbal
Tony Kandow

Bob & Emily Kemnitz
Diane Krause
Jack & Nancy Kropf
Harry Kuptz
Kathryn Laughlin
Corey Leon
Rose & Laran Lerner
Thomas Litzler
Donald & Nancie Loppnow
John Allison & Julia Miller
Ellen Molony
Dennis & Deirdre Moore
Andrew Mutch
Pat & Ron Myers
Samir Narayan
Kent Newman
Sarah & Larry Nooden
Dorothy Nordness
Marjorie Paqualle
Dennis & Tom Patrick
Phillip Poole
Steven Przybyski & Michelle
Deatrick
Harold & Linda Rex
Ann Robbins
Alissa Ruelle
Norman & Marjorie Scott

Memorial Donations

In memory of Frank Baker
by Jocelyn Baker

In memory of Louise Lancaster
by Doris and Lynn Ehrle

In memory of Martha Langham
by Linda Baes

In memory of Manuel and Isabelle Ray
by Donna Chrzanowski

In memory of Daniel R. Sard
by Glen Sard

In memory of Arthur Thoma
by Edward Thoma





Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy 2009 Annual Report

Christopher Scott
John W. & Arlene Shy
Sherrie Siefman
Dorothy & Jack J. Smiley
Virginia Stanch
Sally Petrella & Paul Stark
Kurt Synnestvedt
Kris Talley
Paul & Barbara Trojan
Craig Tylanda
Scott Tyrrell
Lois-Jean Ulrich
Jon & Linda Walton
Tom & Denise Waytes
Paul & Carol Weihe
Joan Wheeler
Jennie Williams
Beverly & David Wolf
Amanda & Carl Woodward
Henry & Dorothy Zelisse

\$50 - \$99

Anonymous
Mr. & Mrs. Adams
Vivienne Armentrout
Cathy Bach & Brian Hazlett
Brenda Baker
Rosalind & Robert Barnsdale
Dietrich Bergmann
Sylvia Bethea
Mary Bohling
Cheryl & Don Bord
Denise & Jim Burrows
Dan & Phyllis Cable
Marta Judy Carr
Robert & Cheryl Catton
Dick & Sue Chase
John & Diane Chudyk
Richard Cobb
Kathy Comstock
Philip Crookshank
Charlotte & Larry Davenport
Lynn & Doris Ehrle
Michael Elliott & Amy Lesemann
Eric & Vivian Ellsworth
John & Amy Fedyk
Rod & Karen Folland
Carol & Lamar Frederick
Tom & Cathy Freeman
Ina Hanel & Michael Gerdenich
Marion & Art Gold
Margy & Jack Goodnoe
Camilla Gorham
H. Frank Green
Ken & Mary Grunow
Carol & Karl Hellman
John & Martha Hicks
Annette Hodesh
John Hodges
Susan Jaranowski & William Sickon
Marty & Denise Johnson

Gifford & Sonya Jones
Joe & Linda Kanamueller
Stephen & Rachel Kaplan
Rich Kato
Marty & Hedi Kaufman
Emily Kerley
Michelle Kolozsvary
Irene Lamanen
Jill A. Lewis
Tom & Judy Lewis
Susan Lind
Jack B. Lutz
Dwight Macock
Dave & Catherine Maki
Barbara Mansfield
Fred C. Matthaei, Jr.
Shane McElwee
Mr. & Mrs. William McKnight
Lynn Mida
Daniel Moerman & Claudine Farrand
Noel Mullett

Up to \$50

Allen & Edna Nickolai
Jung Park
Tom & Wendy Pellerito
Karen Pettke
Roger E. Place
Richard & Elizabeth Quick
Norma Regenold
John Rogers
Liz & Mike Rother
Mr. & Mrs. Sayed
Peter Schriemer
Jack R. Smiley
Dr. Sylvia M. Taylor
Steve Tokarz
James T. Weiner
Joseph & Deborah Aho
Charles & Roberta Anderson
Carl & Sue Van Appledorn
Tom & Rosemary Assenmacher
Ryan Bajema
Dr. Burton Barnes
Arlene Bellas
Mary Anne & David Beltzman
Jennifer Burd
Kelly Shon & Ryan Burkhardt
Paul & Pat Carson
Steve Celeste
Fred Charbonneau
Hasi Cislo
Glen Sard & Gary Clark
Jane Clarke
Stephen & Carole Cook
Roger Corpolongo & Ela Jiga
James & June Coyne
Beaufort Cranford
Cheryl Cunningham
Lily & Dan Secrest
Robert & Dolores Denome

Jackie Digiovanni
Gordon W. Draper
Carol Dubuque
Robert Duchene
Dr. & Mrs. Gerald Dupler
Dick & Diana Dyer
Daniel & Martina Ezekiel
Chris & Rosemarie Fielding
Bill Fortuna & Pamela Sayre
Milton French
Beth Dugdale & Martin Friedburg
Linda Futch
Ed Gordish
Ruth Graves
Thomas Griebe
Estelle Gubow
Mary Guest
J. Rodney & Maryanne Guest
Prashant Datar & Aruna Gurudutt
Ruth Hart
Leslie Hefner
Suzanne B. & Robert L. Heiney
Emily Hughes
Robert & Sue Hughes
Mr. & Mrs. John Mulherin
Ruth & Ed Judd
Deborah Kanter & Leon Pescador
Steven Kerwin
Young-Chun & Yeon-Ok Jang Kim
Mary & Henri Lafrance
Chris Lakin
Bill & Vicki Lang
Sarah Lantz
Susan List
Vicki-Su Maple
Bruce McBeth
Elaine McCalla

Jack & Sharon Mengel
George & Beverly Menham
Nadene Mitcham
Stephen Modell
Janet Moore
James & Lillian Moran
Susan Morse
Jamie Moser
Arthur & Lauren Mullen
Richard Nicholas
Dr. Joe Ohren
Paula & John Parker
Brett Parks
Cindy Paslawski
David Phillips
Leslie Pollington
Tom & Rose Mulherin
Janet Pierce Raisch
Jenifer & Sam Robinson
Arlene A. Rockwell
Grant & Stephenie Ruttinger
Steve & Darlene Secrest
Chris & Ben Seguin
Evelyn Shupit
Rick Simek
Kenneth & Mary Spear
Caryle Spence
Harold & Shirley Strom
Ellen Stross
Nara Subramanian & Gai Raman
Kathleen Kepner-Thomson
Terri Udvare
Betty Utter
Joe & Karen Walacavage
Barry Wauldron
Scott Williams
Mary Clare Yates

Organic Gardener
Jennie Williams
plants her seeds
in egg shells like
this one. When
May arrives, and
frosty nights are
no longer a risk,
this sprout will be
transplanted to
the Community
Organic Garden at
the Conservancy
Farm (see page 8
for more garden
information).

Photo by Jennie Williams



More Van Buren Township Nature Preserve News

SMLC Protects an Urban “Gas ‘N Go” for Migrating Birds

by Rick Simek, Stewardship Committee Chair

You won't find any autos lining up this spring at SMLC's newly protected 26 acre “refueling station” in Van Buren Township. Instead you'll likely find a diverse assortment of migrating songbirds stopping over to “gas up” on insect protein and fat for the



Red-eyed Vireos are regular customers at SMLC preserves like the new one in Van Buren Township. Photo by John Benson

next leg of their journeys. Pumping out the bug fuel for the birds will be lots of large, mature white oaks, especially Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*) on the property.

When we think of oaks feeding birds, we often consider the acorns as being the most important. But according to some recent

and ongoing research, oaks top the list as “living bird feeders” in that they “grow” lots of insects—especially the caterpillars of moths and butterflies. Think of the leafing-out oak branches as stocked shelves of “six-legged steak” for hungry, tired birds on the move. If you watch a migratory songbird gleaning the branches of an oak in spring, you might note its success when it finds and gobbles one juicy caterpillar after another. Adding to its fuel reserves with each caterpillar captured, the bird will be able to continue its migration a little fatter, and better, for the stopover experience.

To give one familiar example of this oak-to-insect-to-bird connection, consider inchworms (larvae of the moth family Geometridae) and Red-eyed Vireos. Inchworms emerge abundantly on oaks in spring, just as the Red-eyed Vireos are moving north through our area. A critical factor for the vireos is

the timing of inchworm emergence: too early or too late, and that refueling source is missed. It's a fascinating connection between climate, insect emergence, and bird migration stopover. At the Van Buren property, the oak trees and the inchworms will be there, and in good years, the timing of the “inchworm factor” will be just right for the stopover vireos. Even during lean inchworm years, perhaps there will be additional “alternative energy” insect sources on the oaks to tide over the vireos.

Given that the Van Buren property is an oasis of green surrounded by a sea of urban development, it will likely draw migrants like a little magnet to its food and shelter. To determine the actual extent of migration stopover value at the site, SMLC is planning to conduct future spring bird surveys there.

The oaks at the Van Buren property have certainly refueled generations of songbird migrants that have come and gone through our local area. Now that the property is protected by SMLC, the “food and lodging” sign for migrating songbirds will be permanently on display!

2010 Garden Plots at the Conservancy Farm

The SMLC Community Organic Garden is a wonderful place to enjoy the great outdoors. We have several 20'x20' and 10'x20' plots available for the 2010 growing season. The Garden is located just behind the barn at the Conservancy Farm on Vreeland Road in Superior Township.

If you are interested in joining us in the Community Organic Garden, please contact Wendy Pellerito at: 734.484.6565 / wpellerito@SMLCland.org or visit www.SMLCland.org for more info.

We hope to see you in the garden soon!

Conservancy Stewardship News

by Scott Tyrrell, Stewardship Coordinator

Thanks to everyone who came out to help SMLC with Stewardship activities in fall 2009. We've made good progress maintaining habitat on the preserves. We will be starting back up with this work this spring. In particular, May is Garlic Mustard Month and later on in the summer and fall we will be pulling buckthorn and phragmites. Please watch your email for event dates and come on out!

This past October, 25 volunteers from the **University of Michigan Gandhi Day of Service** came out to help with clean-up and repair projects around the Conservancy Farm as well as much-needed trail maintenance at LeFurge Woods Nature Preserve (LeFurge) - cutting back brush and sawing through some of the many large ash trees that have fallen due to Emerald Ash Borer. In March, the **University of Michigan Engineering Council Honors Society** came out to continue the trail maintenance as well as clean, repair and install bluebird nest boxes in time for spring nesting season.

This spring, SMLC preserves will be getting new signs regarding their protected status. We will be looking for volunteers to help with this important project soon.

A big **Thank You** to these volunteers who have been helping with other SMLC stewardship work: to **Neil**



Volunteers repairing and cleaning bluebird nest boxes at LeFurge Woods Nature Preserve in March 2010. Photo by Scott Tyrrell

and **Jeanne Chapel** for beginning a needed update of SMLC conservation easement photographs; to **Gary Grosshans** for plowing out the Conservancy Farm after major snowfalls this past winter; to **Lynn Mida** for helping post no-hunting signs at Morris-Reichert Nature Preserve; and to **Les Pollington** for repairing the picnic table at LeFurge.

If you are interested in **helping SMLC with Stewardship projects and/or you would like to receive project announcement emails**, please contact **Scott Tyrrell** at styrrell@smlcland.org or 734.484.6565 for more information or to sign-up.

Naturalists and Watchers help SMLC preserves

SMLC has created two new key volunteer positions within the Stewardship program. Nature Preserve Naturalists and Watchers fulfill important duties that help out the Stewardship Coordinator by keeping track of human and ecological activity on SMLC lands.

Naturalists are volunteers who have a biology or ecology background and help SMLC by monitoring their assigned preserve during each of the four seasons. Naturalists watch for natural

changes in the preserve and report those findings back to SMLC. SMLC can then determine if specific intervention is necessary based on those findings.

Watchers are volunteers who are able to visit their assigned preserve monthly, noting anything unusual and reporting anomalies or inappropriate activities to SMLC. Things a Watcher will look for include whether visitors and neighbors have dogs on leashes, pick up after themselves, and are

not violating any of the other preserve rules.

Many thanks to the following individuals for already signing up to help SMLC in this way: **Robert Ayotte, Janet Bourgon, Les Pollington, Bill Secrest, and Mark Stevens.**

SMLC currently has openings for both volunteer positions at some of our nature preserves. Please contact Scott Tyrrell, at styrrell@SMLCland.org for more information.

Local Division News

Monroe County Land Conservancy

By Peter Fales, MCLC Chair

Good News! Since 2006 members of the Monroe County Land Conservancy, a local division of Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, have been involved in a large conservation project that is located in the heart of the city of Monroe, the Academy Preserve project. This project seeks to conserve 127 acres of natural areas, farmland, and open space including valuable river frontage for use as a public nature preserve and education center. The property is currently owned by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM). The IHM Sisters have agreed to work with the Friends of the Academy Preserve and the property would be held by the County of Monroe once the project is completed.

In December 2008, the Friends of the Academy Preserve secured the second part of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant.

This grant totals \$2.2 million

and covers 75% of the purchase price of the land. The Friends continue to work hard to raise the required 25% matching funds needed for the purchase. Current project work includes a land survey and two separate land appraisals, which are requirements of the State grant. When these items are complete purchase negotiations with the IHM Sisters can begin.

Gifts in support of the Academy Preserve project can be given to either the Community Foundation of Monroe County (734-242-1976) which has set up a project fund or to SMLC which will pass on the gift to the project fund.



Barn Swallows

Superior Land Conservancy

By Brenda Baker, SLC Co-Chair

The Superior Land Conservancy local division is promoting a new land protection project for this year. Two parcels of land are being considered, which together would provide a connection between SMLC-owned and County-owned properties. These “Superior Greenway Connector Parcels” would essentially complete the goal of a continuous trail system from Ford Road to Geddes Road. Watch for more details.

The SLC division is also developing a structured approach to engage local groups (scouts, churches, school groups, clubs, etc.) in stewardship activities. Meanwhile, we are working to better organize

existing and future individual volunteers, in cooperation with the SMLC Stewardship Coordinator.

The SLC local division will be reaching out to existing supporters, enrolling new supporters, and facilitating connections with key stakeholders—all in an effort to grow, cultivate, and nurture the local support base—the people who make our work possible.

SLC will again have an informational presence at the Dixboro Fair (Aug. 7) and the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival (Aug. 20, 21, 22), and this year we are adding the Superior Township Green Fair (June 19). We will be hosting at least two nature walks, and assisting SMLC with some regional happenings in Superior Township.

Finally, the Superior Land Conservancy Steering Committee now stands at four members, and we’d like to have about seven. If you are interested in serving on the Steering Committee or helping staff our tent at one of the events, please call Brenda Baker at (734) 482-8084.

Superior Greenway News

Washtenaw County's Meyer Preserve grows again

by Richard Kent, Land Protection Committee Chair

In August of 2008, the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC) became the owner of 139 acres in Superior Township, Washtenaw County. The Natural Areas Preservation Program property is called the Meyer Preserve to acknowledge the family which long held land in the Township. The 139 acres consists of two parcels on Prospect Road at the intersection of Vreeland Road: a 55 acre parcel located northeast of the intersection and an 84 acre parcel to the southwest.

In March 2010, WCPARC purchased an additional 44 acres to the west of the 84 acre parcel acquired in 2008. This purchase enabled the inclusion and protection of the western portion of the woodlot located on the 84 acre parcel. This diverse woods harbors excellent examples of native hardwoods - mature shagbark hickory, maple and oak, and *Carex lupuliformis*, a state threatened sedge.

The remainder of the parcel, about 25 acres, will remain in cultivation by Richard Hauk. Gary

Grosshans farms the approximately 65 acres of productive agricultural land on the original 139 acres.

Both farmers, who pay the County a rental fee, have worked with WCPARC staff to identify the best land to be cropped for intensive agriculture. Land removed from crop production is converted to native grass plantings (mainly switch grass) to serve as silt-capturing filter strips or buffer areas. Filter strips reduce erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, and are mowed in some places to form walking trails in the preserve.

Visitor parking is available at the LeFurge Woods Nature Preserve, owned by the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, across Prospect Road from the 84 acre parcel.



Farm land protected at the Meyer Preserve in Superior Township. Photo by Charles Scott

Another 40 acres protected in Superior Greenway

by David Phillips, Superior Township Clerk

On February 16, 2010, the Superior Township Board of Trustees approved a Consent Judgment which covers 77 acres located at the northwest corner of Prospect and Geddes Roads. The Consent Judgment resulted in the dismissal of a lawsuit that sought to place 235 homes on the property that would have been served by a private waste water treatment system on the property.

Additional outcomes from the Consent Judgment are as follows:

- eight acres on one corner was purchased by the Township for future use to build a fire station;
- 40 acres is covered by a Conservation Easement which limits use to pasture, crops and other



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agricultural uses;

- the construction of a farm supply store is allowed on the remaining 29 acre parcel where the existing equestrian arena and stables are located;
- buildings on the 29 acre and 40 acre parcels cannot be built closer than 250' from Prospect Rd.

In addition, the buyer plans on re-locating the Superior Feed Company to the site. The store is currently located in Ann Arbor Township and has a long history of serving the agricultural community.

Superior Township Board members indicated that the terms of the Consent Judgment would contribute to the viability of open space and agriculture uses in the Township as well as resolve the lawsuit.

YES! I want to help preserve critical natural habitat in southeast Michigan by supporting Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy.

Total gift \$ _____

Check this box to have SMLC use my gift where it is needed most.

Or, direct my donation:

General Fund \$ _____

Land Protection Fund \$ _____

Stewardship Endowment Fund \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy
and mail to: **Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy**

**8383 Vreeland Rd.
Superior Township, MI 48198**

Or, make a secure online credit card donation at **www.SMLCland.org**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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E-mail _____

All donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.
The donor received no goods or services in exchange for this donation.
E-mail used for SMLC news/announcements.
We will never give or sell your personal information to any other group.

Wish List

Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy could use the following items:

- modern commercial **lawn mower** in good working order for mowing preserve trails (retail cost \$10,000)
- heavy duty **rototiller** in good working order for the Garden program (retail cost \$2,000)
- modern **laptop computer**, in good working order, with Windows XP or newer for use in the field (retail cost \$1,000)
- 8x10 or 10x12 foot **living room rug**, excellent condition, in keeping with the historic character of the farmhouse; please no stripes; call for details (retail cost \$300+)
- **brush loppers** preferably with replaceable blades (retail cost \$25)
- **brush saws** with replaceable blades - all sizes (retail cost \$20)
- 2 portable & storable 6ft or 8ft **banquet tables** with folding legs, good condition.

Please contact Scott or Wendy at the SMLC office if you would like to make our wishes come true!

(734) 484-6565
styrrell@smlcland.org

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